

GAY SCENES ON VERA CRUZ SHIPS

Moving Pictures and Boxing
Bouts Chief Diversions.

OFFICERS AT THE RINGSIDE

But Bluejackets, Astride Big Guns and
Crowding Cage Maats, Form the
Court of Last Decision in All Con-
tests—Sailors on Shore Leave Return
With All Sorts of Curiosities.

To all external appearances the American fleet at Vera Cruz has put aside thoughts of its vitalizing yet deadly experience ashore and gives no sign of its recent human sacrifices as a result of the "peaceful occupation" of Vera Cruz, says Dudley Harmon in a recent dispatch from Vera Cruz to the New York Sun.

That is the beauty about the navy in a situation like the present, he continues. The new navy has the faculty of making for itself more business than any other institution could conceive of; a faculty which is at times annoying, but under conditions at Vera Cruz a most happy circumstance.

On some evenings and on some ships the fleet is really as gay as it looks. The bluejacket dearly loves a party, and with the relaxations of peace about Vera Cruz opportunities for satisfying the desire for recreation have gradually increased. Every battleship is now a moving picture theater, and the presence of the majority of the vessels of the fleet at Vera Cruz affords opportunity for an almost unlimited exchange of movie films between ships.

Boxing and Vaudeville.

To the landsman, however, the audience at these shows is the most interesting feature of the spectacle. On the Arkansas, for example, Admiral Badger's flagship, and one of the giants of the fleet, second only to the New York, it is a scene long to be remembered when the after deck is transformed into a theater. Atop the extreme after turret the screen is rigged, with the band just in front of it, and then a boxing ring, also used as a vaudeville stage.

Officers are honored with chairs "at the ringside," but above their heads are hundreds of bluejackets with much finer seats. The upper works of the ship are completely hidden, bluejackets covering the turret tops, sitting astride the twelve inch guns and crowding the great cage masts. They are the real gallery gods, the court of last decision from whose verdict the performer has no appeal.

But it is not all play for the bluejacket at Vera Cruz by a good deal. The boat crews running to shore and to other ships are on duty day and night. All sorts of repairs are under way, while ships are being freshly painted within and without. Every afternoon all the sailing boats are put over the side and the crews drilled in elementary seamanship, but also every afternoon a swimming party goes ashore from each ship for the instruction of those who have not qualified as swimmers, while those who have qualified are permitted to splash over the ship's side at 5 every evening and at 7 in the morning.

Shore leave has been given the last few days, at first only twenty-five men from each ship every afternoon, but gradually increasing as the first parties returned with promptness. As a result the ships are rapidly becoming floating menageries and junk shops.

Parrots have come aboard by the score, with a few canaries and dogs and goats. Strange and sticky Mexican concoctions of sugar and coconut have been brought alongside almost by the ton, to be distributed among those not so fortunate as to win out in the drawings for shore leave. Mexican baskets, red pottery, blankets and even the gaudy pictures of which the Mexican peon is so fond are now decorating secluded spots about the ships.

Good Spenders.

Ashore in his captured city the bluejacket is a king. In his neat white dress uniform and black neckerchief, well set up, with fresh complexion and clear eye, he is a sight good to behold in contrast with the slouching, dirty and underdressed Mexicans. There is not a corner of the city so remote but what he is to be found there, usually bargaining for something to eat, drink or take home.

The money changers are doing a thriving business, while for the small storekeepers and street vendors it is a real harvest. The bluejacket has nothing cheap about him. Every afternoon strings of coaches go to the wharf where the liberty parties land sure of getting plenty of fares as soon as the sailors have provided themselves with the Mexican opinion one does not attain real dignity and affluence by riding in a coach unless smoking a big black cigar.

Vera Cruzans have been quick to learn the bluejackets' tastes, and it sometimes seems as if at least half the population had gone into the merchandising business looking for the soldiers' and sailors' money. Establishments are changing their signs from Spanish to English or adding "English spoken" to their advertisements, though the fact usually is that their English is limited to a knowledge of Uncle Sam's coinage.

SHOWS FARMERS MOVE TOO OFTEN

Census Indicates the Cause of
Many Failures.

1,000,000 LEFT WITHIN YEAR

Results Shown in Crop Tabulations,
Which Prove Smaller Yield in Sec-
tions Where Frequency of Removal
From the Land is Greatest—Con-
ditions Vary in Different Sections.

Do farmers in the United States move from farm to farm, from home to home, as much as city people? If they move every few years are they as efficient farmers and can they know their farms as they should? Would constant change mean low yields of crops and little interest in the community? These are some of the questions affecting rural communities that are coming to the foreground, and for the first time a partial answer can be given with authority.

During the agricultural census of 1910 this question was submitted to each farmer for answer: "How long have you lived on this farm?" Of the 6,361,502 farm operators in the United States April 15, 1910, 5,794,708, or 91 per cent, answered the question satisfactorily. From the data obtained from the answers to this inquiry a bulletin will be issued soon by the bureau of the census, department of commerce.

The statistics will show the length of the periods of occupancy of farms in the United States by states, geographic divisions and sections, for different periods of time ranging from less than one year to ten years and over, and these data are further classified according to the character of the tenure and of the color of the farm operators. The statistics are given for 1910 only, as no corresponding data have been collected heretofore.

Cause of Frequent Failure.

One of the most important facts is that approximately 52 per cent of the farmers who answered the question satisfactorily had occupied their farms less than five years. This short period of occupancy for over half of all the farmers in this country becomes all the more significant when it is taken into consideration that it requires three or four years for a farmer to become acquainted with the various conditions on his farm, such as soil, climate, etc., and put it in good condition for raising crops.

Different conditions are found in different sections. In the north 57 per cent, or nearly three-fifths, of the farmers had operated their farms for five years or longer, while only 22 per cent had been there one year or less. In the west the proportions were 44 and 27 per cent respectively, while in the south only 41 per cent had been on the same farm five years or longer and 34 per cent, or over one-third, had been there one year or less. A great number of farmers had operated their farms "less than one year" than from "five to nine years, inclusive." More than 1,000,000 farmers reported that they had operated their farms "less than one year," about 628,000 reported residence of "one year," an average of about 457,000 reported a residence of "two years," "three years" and "four years," and an average of less than 200,000 reported residence for periods of "five to nine years."

The figures returned by the "occupancy of farms" census also show that the farmers classified as "owners, free," move from farm to farm much less frequently than the "share tenants"—farmers who rent farms on shares.

Effect on Crop Production.

The showing of greater stability of occupancy by the farmers in the north as compared with the farmers in the south and the west is more significant when comparisons are made of the production of farm crops. Corn is grown extensively both in the north and in the south and probably is the best crop to use as a basis of comparison. According to the figures from the reports of the census, the average yield of corn per acre in 1909 in the New England states was forty-five bushels; in the middle Atlantic states, thirty-two bushels; in the east north central states, thirty-nine bushels, and in the west north central states, twenty-eight bushels, while in the south Atlantic states, where the farmers shifted from farm to farm more than in the north and west, the average yield of corn per acre was sixteen bushels; in the east south central states, nineteen bushels, and in the west south central, sixteen bushels. These figures seem to show that in those sections where farmers generally have operated the same farms for periods of five years and over the yield of corn is considerably larger than in the sections where the period of occupancy is more unstable or for shorter periods of time.

Police Dogs Learning English.

A training school for police dogs at Mamaroneck, N. Y., occupies a seventeen-acre farm. At the present time seventeen German shepherd dogs are learning all that they should know prior to making their American debut in exhibitions. The first thing that these dogs have to be taught is English, as most of them understand nothing but German.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COM- MISSION.

Owosso, Mich., June 8, 1914.

Regular meeting of the Commission, Mayor DeYoung presiding.
Members present, DeYoung, Hanscom, Rosevear.

The minutes of the last regular meeting were read and approved as printed.

PETITIONS

The following petitions were presented and referred to the department of Public Improvements:

Petition No. 839

To the Commission of the City of Owosso, Michigan:

Whereas the undersigned residents of Comstock street, between Park and Saginaw streets, hereby petition for the sprinkling of said Comstock street between the streets named during the season of 1914. We hereby severally agree to reimburse the city of Owosso for the expense of said sprinkling at the close of the season and in default of payment the amount may be placed as a special assessment upon our property located in said sprinkling district.

Charles F. Milster and 4 others.

Petition No. 840

To the Commission of the City of Owosso, Michigan:

Whereas the undersigned residents of Comstock street, between Park and Saginaw streets, hereby petition for the sprinkling of said Comstock street between the streets named during the season of 1914. We hereby severally agree to reimburse the city of Owosso for the expense of said sprinkling at the close of the season and in default of payment the amount may be placed as a special assessment upon our property located in said sprinkling district.

Mrs. A. M. Beattie and 6 others.

Petition No. 841

To the Commission of the City of Owosso, Michigan:

Whereas the undersigned residents of King street, between South Park and Saginaw streets, hereby petition for the sprinkling of said King street between the streets named during the season of 1914. We hereby severally agree to reimburse the city of Owosso for the expense of said sprinkling at the close of the season and in default of payment the amount may be placed as a special assessment upon our property located in said sprinkling district.

C. E. Underwood and 2 others.

Petition No. 842

To the Commission of the City of Owosso, Michigan:

Whereas the undersigned residents of Comstock street, between Park and Saginaw streets, hereby petition for the sprinkling of said Comstock street between the streets named during the season of 1914. We hereby severally agree to reimburse the city of Owosso for the expense of said sprinkling at the close of the season and in default of payment the amount may be placed as a special assessment upon our property located in said sprinkling district.

DeYoung, Hanscom, Rosevear.

Resolved by the Commission of the City of Owosso that it be and is hereby determined by this Commission that a sewer be constructed along West Main street in the City of Owosso, Michigan, from Galsusha street north to and that five-sixths of the entire cost, including the cost of surveys, plans, estimates, maintenance, advertising and cost of construction, be paid by special assessment, and the remainder of the cost thereof be paid from the general fund of the City of Owosso.

That the special assessment district upon which the special assessment aforesaid is levied is hereby bounded and described as follows, to-wit: Commencing at a point on the west line of the Ann Arbor Railroad Company's right of way and extending north to the north line of Main street; thence north parallel to and 132 feet from the north line of Main street to a point on the center line of Brooks street; thence south to the center line of Main street to a point 132 feet south of the center line of Main street, thence east to the center line of Main street to the right of way of the Ann Arbor Railroad Company; thence northwesterly along the west line of said right of way to the beginning; all in the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan.

The City Assessor is hereby directed to prepare a special assessment roll for the special assessment aforesaid for said improvement for the sum of \$11,048.85, the same being five-sixths of the cost of said work as estimated and the cost of surveys, plans, estimates, maintenance, advertising and cost of construction; said assessment to be made upon basis of benefits derived from said improvement.

On filing said assessment roll in the office of the City Clerk by the City Assessor and it being by the said City Clerk consecutively filed and certified to by the City Assessor, the City Clerk is hereby directed to give notice, according to the terms of said charter, for at least two weeks in some newspaper of the City of Owosso, of the action of the Commission in relation to the proposed improvement above described, of the work to be done and of the district to be assessed and the time when the Commission will meet and consider objections thereto, and that the special assessment roll theretofore made by the Assessor for the purpose of defraying the cost of the expense of said improvement, and that the Commission will meet at the time therein set forth, to review said assessment roll, at which time and place opportunity will be given all persons interested to be heard regarding the improvement and the assessment.

Mr. DeYoung moved that the plans, diagrams, specifications and estimates of cost for the construction of sewer on West Main street, as shown on the plan, be approved, which prevailed, DeYoung, Hanscom, Rosevear.

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Resolved by the Commission of the City of Owosso that it be and is hereby determined by this Commission that a sewer be constructed along West Main street in the City of Owosso, Michigan, from Galsusha street north to and that five-sixths of the entire cost, including the cost of surveys, plans, estimates, maintenance, advertising and cost of construction, be paid by special assessment, and the remainder of the cost thereof be paid from the general fund of the City of Owosso.

That the special assessment district upon which the special assessment aforesaid is levied is hereby bounded and described as follows, to-wit: Commencing at a point on the west line of the Ann Arbor Railroad Company's right of way and extending north to the north line of Main street; thence north parallel to and 132 feet from the north line of Main street to a point on the center line of Brooks street; thence south to the center line of Main street to a point 132 feet south of the center line of Main street, thence east to the center line of Main street to the right of way of the Ann Arbor Railroad Company; thence northwesterly along the west line of said right of way to the beginning; all in the City of Owosso, Shiawassee County, Michigan.

The City Assessor is hereby directed to prepare a special assessment roll for the special assessment aforesaid for said improvement for the sum of \$11,048.85, the same being five-sixths of the cost of said work as estimated and the cost of surveys, plans, estimates, maintenance, advertising and cost of construction; said assessment to be made upon basis of benefits derived from said improvement.

On filing said assessment roll in the office of the City Clerk by the City Assessor and it being by the said City Clerk consecutively filed and certified to by the City Assessor, the City Clerk is hereby directed to give notice, according to the terms of said charter, for at least two weeks in some newspaper of the City of Owosso, of the action of the Commission in relation to the proposed improvement above described, of the work to be done and of the district to be assessed and the time when the Commission will meet and consider objections thereto, and that the special assessment roll theretofore made by the Assessor for the purpose of defraying the cost of the expense of said improvement, and that the Commission will meet at the time therein set forth, to review said assessment roll, at which time and place opportunity will be given all persons interested to be heard regarding the improvement and the assessment.

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On filing said assessment roll in the office of the City Clerk by the City Assessor and it being by the said City